THE Subjects Duty.

A SERMON

Preached at the

CATHEDRAL

IN

NORWICH,

Before the Right Worshipful the Mayor and Court of Aldermen, *April* 16. 1676.

By *John Cleaver*, M. A. Rector of *Tichwel* in *Norfolk*.

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The Epistle Dedicatory.

To the Right Worshipful *John Manser*, Esq; Mayor of the City of *Norwich*.

SIR,

WHen (what is now sent Abroad) was Preached before you: The hearty Zeal which you shewed to these Truths then Delivered, (though some of them, such as are not very pleasing to Flesh and Blood) makes me really Believe, you savour the Things of God; and Prefer them, before whatsoever else may Concern you, in this World: This hearty Zeal, which you then Testified by your chearful Attention, at the time of the Delivery of them, and your kind Approbation of them afterwards, with your earnest Request to me, (though a meer Stranger to you) that they might be made Publick, is, and ever will be, a publick Testimony of your unquestionable Loyalty. Your Wisdoms judging the Publication thereof, might be Beneficial not only to your City, in particular, but to the whole Nation, in General, and for that end, desiring the Publication of them.

In Obedience therefore to your Desires (as you were pleased to Entitle them) which were to me Commands, as I shall ever look upon them; that I may shew by my own Practice, how Real I was, in what I delivered, concerning the necessity of Obedience, to the lawful Commands of our Superiours, (contrary to my own Inclinations, of ever Appearing to the publick Eye of the

World) I have nevertheless herein readily Obeyed you: Heartily wishing, that your Hopes of its being Advantagious, to the publick Peace and Quiet of this Nation, may have their desired Effect. To wit,

That Christianity, and Loyalty, *God's* Right, *and* Cæsars *due, (which Heaven it self hath joyned together) may never, by any one, who pretends himself a true Son of the Church of* England, *that is, a Professor and an Abettor of the Ancient, Catholick, Apostolick Doctrine and Practice, which were in these Particulars, very Eminent in the Primitive Christians; I say, that such may never (under what specious pretences soever) go about to part these two asunder. This, as it was the Intent of me, when I first Penned and Preached this Discourse. So is, and ever shall be prayed for,*

By,

Your Worships Humbly Devoted

in all Holy Endeavours,

Tichwel, April 28. 1676.

John Cleaver.

Titus,

TITUS 3. part of the first Verse.

Put them in mind to be Subject to Principalities and Powers, to Obey Magistrates.

WHen I had seriously considered with my self, of those manifold extraordinary Miseries and Mischiefs, to which this sinful Island hath of late years been subject: How many blind Sects and Schisms, to the Terror of our selves, and Amazement of Forreign Nations, hath sprung up amongst us; What Rendings and Divisions both in Church and State, what an huge heap of Calamities befallen us through Innate Discords: When with a sad Heart I had pondered on these things, it put me upon a sober Inquiry into the Spring and Original of these Evils; where I found upon mature deliberation, that though many might be Assigned, yet this appear'd to me, as one chief Cause or Ground, that Selfishness and Pride of Heart, which generally reigns in Men, (I wish I had not Reason to say in the Men of *England* especially) whereby all Subjection, though to never so Lawful Authority, becomes Burdensome, and is cry'd out upon as Intolerable. Hence those ordinary Clamours, Noises, and Janglings, with which this Island daily rings; a freedom from Government and Governours, (which is the true English of a Toleration) Liberty of the Subject pretended, Enslaving of Church and State intended; Care for tender Consciences premised, and induction of Errors, Schisms, Heresies, Uproars, Confusion, and Desolation devised; which occasioned that Speech of the Learned and Meek Mr. *Hooker*, long since; *Give me the Hearts of all Men humbled, and there is nought which can disturb, the Tranquility, Peace, and Happiness of the whole World.*

'Tis Pride of Heart, a corrupt licentiousness of Spirit, a desiring to be like Gods our selves, to be Subject to no Law, no Rule, no Government, to be at our own Dispose, our own Liking, which sets Men on to oppose either Church or State: This made Man at first fall out with his own Happiness, and to this day is the Source of the greatest Evils which Mankind labours under.

When Pride hath gotten the Heart, to set up it self and its own way for a Rule, neither Law of God or Man can so over-rule it,

but

but that it Equivocates with the one, and Despiseth the other. The sad experience of these things, hath of late years been too much manifested amongst us, when Men who own themselves for Christians, living under Christian Governours, shall Quarrel with, and cry out against the Chiefs of Church and State, neglect their Commands, slight their Injunctions, oppose their Laws, dispute their Precepts, and instead of ready Subjection to, call in Question whatsoever is Authorized by them; as if we lived not under a Christian Prince, but under some Heathen, or Atheist: Nay, it must argue somewhat worse, for the Primitive Christians ever held themselves bound in Conscience, to obey their Lawful, though Heathenish, or Atheistical Superiours.

Strange therefore is the Ignorance, (shall I say) or the Impudence of those Persons, who have not been ashamed, lately to Publish to the World, that Subjection and Obedience to Sovereign Princes, as God's Vicegerents, as his Deputies, as his Anointed, is forsooth a Novel Doctrine; when it is clear from this and many other places of Scripture, that it is no other Doctrine, than what was taught by the Apostles themselves; nay, which was not only the constant Doctrine of the Primitive Christians, and Martyrs, but in those Days, the Glory of the Christian Church, and that whereby in a special manner Christianity it self, at first gained ground upon a Heathen World; to wit, by the ready Subjection and Obedience of the Professors of it, to the lawful Commands of the several Princes under whom they lived. Yet this very Doctrine now, if some Men may be Credited, must be looked upon, as a *Laudean Device*, a new piece of Divinity, never heard of in former Ages, and not now embraced, or received by any Churches in *Christendom*, but only amongst some few of our own Nation; and so would bear the World in hand, as if it were the peculiar Folly of the present English Clergy.

The Case being thus, I hope it will not appear to you either Impertinent, or Unseasonable for the clearing of our Mother the Church from those Calumnies which are cast upon Her, and for the keeping you from those Snares which are laid for you, to shew you the *Antiquity* of this Doctrine from St. *Paul*; who by charging *Titus*, charged us also, *To put you in mind, to be Subject to Principalities and Powers, to Obey Magistrates.*

In the former part of this Epistle, the Apostle had been very careful, that *Titus* in the discharge of his Ministerial Function, should propound the several Offices and Duties of Christianity unto several Estates and Conditions of Men: In this Chapter he would have him, teach more General or Publick Duties, which con-

concern no one Estate more than another, but all Christians of what Estate or Condition soever they be. One of the chief of these, is that in my Text: *Titus* must instruct all Christians under him, in their Duties towards Magistrates. I shall not be curious in dividing the words, two things are considerable in them.

I. The manner of propounding the Counsel, or giving the Command, *Put them in mind.*

II. The substance of the Command it self; *To be subject to Principalities and Powers, to Obey Magistrates.*

First, The manner, *Put them in mind:* That is, let it be thy frequent and special care, to put all Christians under thee in mind, to yield all honest Obedience to the Kings and Governours under whom they live. The Apostle saith not, Speak, or Teach this, or Exhort them to this; which Terms he had often used in this Epistle before: But, *Put them in mind*; ὑπομίμνησκε αὐτὸς, *In memoriam reduc audientibus*; Bring it again to their remembrance, as *Grotius* well expounds it. The word in the Original, properly signifieth, to recal a thing past to mind. A thing, I say, though formerly well enough understood, yet for the present forgotten, or at least not duly considered. Thus we find the word used, *Luke* 22. 61. Peter *remembred the word of the Lord*. *Titus* is here enjoyned two things,

1. To call back into their minds, an old Doctrine, not what they had newly learned since their becoming Christians; but what Nature and Reason had taught them long before, to wit, *To be subject to Principalities and Powers*; a truth that they had then no necessity of being Taught any further, than to let them understand that Christianity had not taken off those Obligations from Believers; Subjection and Obedience to Sovereign Authority, being no small part of the Christians Duty; a Debt so just, and so well in those days known to be so, that the Apostle with Reason supposeth, none could be Ignorant of; only because Men generally are not so forward to perform known Duties as they should be; he saw it needful they should be sometimes upon all just occasions Admonished and Reminded thereof by their Teachers.

2. *Titus* is here commanded, to Inculcate, or beat often upon this Point, and that for weighty Reasons;

First, Because Men generally are ambitious of Liberty, unwilling, if Lust, or Pride of Heart be listned to, to be subject to any Yoke, whether of God or Man; ever ready to think one Man as good as another, and with *Corah* to suggest, that every *Moses* and *Aaron* takes too much upon him.

Secondly,

Secondly, Becauſe the diſperſed *Jews* (of whom there was no ſmall number at that time in *Crete*) ſtood very much upon Temporal Priviledges; as upon *Abraham*, the Temple, the Law, *&c.* And ever loth they were to ſtoop to the Authority of the *Gentiles*.

Thirdly, Becauſe the Chriſtians at that time, both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, ſtood as much upon Spiritual Priviledges, not thinking it ſufficient to be ſet free from the thraldom of Satan, and bondage of Sin, and ſo to be made Spiritual Kings unto God and the Lamb; unleſs by a boundleſs (Chriſtian) Liberty, as they ſuppoſed, they might be at their own hands to do as they liſted.

Theſe may be ſome of thoſe Reaſons, wherefore St. *Paul* enjoyned *Titus*, to remind the Chriſtians under his charge, of their Subjection and Obedience to Principalities and Powers. So much of the firſt Point, the manner of propounding the Counſel, or giving the Command; *Put them in mind.*

Secondly, The ſubſtance of the Precept it ſelf: In relation to which, I ſhall ſpeak,

Firſt, Of the Duties required, which are two: Subjection, Obedience.

Secondly, Of the Perſons, to whom they are due, from whom they are due.

Firſt, Of the Duties, Subjection and Obedience. The difference between theſe two, I take to be this:

1. That by Subjection, is meant, Honour, Reverence, and Reſpect, to the Perſons whom God hath ſet in Authority over us. *Put them in mind to be Subject*; that is, make them to know and to acknowledg their own Station; that they are below, the Magiſtrate by God placed above them; and therefore that they never go about to uſurp either that Power or Honour, which belongs not to them: But contrariwiſe, pay to the Supreme Power, that due Honour, Reverence and Reſpect, which by the Laws of God and Nature, are required from Inferiours to Superiours.

2. By Obedience, I take to be meant, a free voluntary readineſs of Mind to yield to, and to Execute whatſoever lawful Command of a Superiour. This may be conſidered as a Conſequence, or an Effect of the former. For where there is a Conſcience of Subjection, there will be Chearfulneſs in Obedience. This Duty is well expreſſed by * Mr. *Calvin*, thus, *That with ready and willing Minds, Subjects diſcharge the Duties of Obſervance and Obedience towards their Soveraigns; whether it be in Obeying their Edicts, or in paying Tribute, or in undergoing Publick Offices, and Employs; or in whatever elſe ſhall be commanded them by the Authority.* Thus far ev n Mr. *Calvin* himſelf goes: But I ſhall rather chuſe to conclude

* *Calv. Inſtit. lib. 4. cap. 20. Sect. 23.*

clude this, with that general Rule of Obedience, which is recommended to us, by * *Gregory Nazianzen*, in these words: *This is one of our Laws, and of those Laudable ones, most excellently Ordained by the Spirit of God, (who knew best how to temper His Law with the mixture of what was Possible to us, and Honest in it self).* That as Servants should be Obedient to their Masters, and Wives to their Husbands, and the Church to our Lord, and Disciples to their Pastors; so should We also be Obedient to all Higher Powers, not only for fear of Punishment, but also for Conscience sake.

* *Greg. Naz. Orat. 17. ad Cives timore perculsos.*

Secondly, The second considerable in the substance of the Precept, is,

1. The Persons, to whom these Duties belong, namely to all Magistrates, which are here distributed into two ranks, Principalities, Powers. By the former, we understand such who have Primary, and Plenary Power under God, and by this their proper Power and Authority, have an absolute Command within their several Dominions; such are *Cæsars*, Kings, and Chief Governours in Free-States: The latter signifieth such as exercise Delegated Authority, that is, Hold from those Higher Powers; and such are all Inferiour Officers, whether in Church or State; who have no Authority to Act in any publick Business, but what they receive from the Supreme Magistrate.

Thus we find Governours ranked into Kings, and those that are in Authority under them, 1 *Tim.* 2. 2. And into Kings, and those that are sent of them, 1 *Pet.* 2. 14. We may indeed, every where observe, where the Scripture enjoyns Subjection, that this Subjection implys in it, a subordination or orderly Subjection, to every one in his proper Rank and Degree. This was the Centurions acknowledgment in the Gospel, that he was a Man set under Authority, yet so as he had Souldiers also under him, who were as Obedient to his Commands, as he was to the Injunctions of his Superiours: *I say unto one go, and he goeth*, &c. * As *Otho* speaketh in *Tacitus*, *The Authority of Generals, and the Rigour of Military Discipline, is of that Nature, that many things must be simply enjoyned by the Collonels and Captains, and if when Commands are given out, it be allowed the Common Souldiers, to dispute and question them.* Obedience falling, Government it self must fall to the Ground: Neither doth this only hold in the Camp, but in the Church, and in the State. This kind of Subordination must necessarily be observed.

* *Tac. Hist. Lib. 1.*

2. The Persons, from whom these Dues are to be paid. This is soon decided: The Persons solvant, are all Christians in general, without any exception, but of the Supreme Magistrate himself;

Clergy as well as Laity; all who are under Authority, the Apostle includes all, in the word ἀυτὸς, *Put them in mind*: That is, all Inferiours; *Every Soul must be Subject to the Higher Powers.* Having thus far explained the subject Matter of the Apostles Command, I proceed to the Observations arising out of it.

Observ. 1. Christian Religion destroys not Government or Civil Authority, but Ratifieth and Confirmeth it. They were Christians whom St. *Paul* enjoyned *Titus*, to remind of their Subjection and Obedience to Magistrates. And the Christian Souldiers (of whom the main Bulk of *Julian* the Apostates Army consisted) did not revolt from him, as he had done from Christ; but ever held themselves ti'd in Conscience, as well to render nnto *Cæsar*, the things that are *Cæsars*, as unto God the things that are Gods. Of which, thus St. *Augustine*, * when they came to the Cause of Christ, they would acknowledg no Lord but Him that is in Heaven, when he would have them to worship Idols, and to offer Incense, they preferred God before him: But when he said, go forth to Fight, Invade such a Nation, they presently obeyed. They distinguished their Eternal Lord, from their Temporal, and yet were subject to their Temporal Lord, for his sake that was their Lord Eternal. The Reasons for this Observation may be these:

* St. *August.* in *Psal.* 124.

Reas. 1. Without Order, there is no living in a Publick Society, because the want thereof, is the Mother of Confusion; whereupon Division of necessity followeth, and out of division, Destruction. The Apostle therefore giving instructions to Publick Societies, requireth that all things be Orderly done: Now Order can have no place in things, except it be settled amongst the Persons, that shall by Office be conversant about them; and if things and Persons be Ordered, this doth imply that they are distinguished by Degrees, for Order is a gradual Disposition; the whole World consisting of parts so many, so different, is by this only thing upheld. He which framed them, hath set them in Order. The very Deity it self keepeth and requireth for ever this to be kept as a Law, that wheresoever there is a Coaugmentation of many, the Lowest be knit to the Highest, by that which being Interjacent, may cause each to cleave to other, and so all to become one.

2. The Kingdom of Christ is not of this World, his Authority divideth not civil Inheritances, his Scepter swolloweth not up (as did *Aarons* Rod the others) the Scepter of worldly Monarchs;

Non eripit Terrestria,
Qui Regna dat Cælestia.

His,

His Weapons are not Carnal, the Keys of his Kingdom are no Temporal Juriſdiction. Our Saviour himſelf long ſince, reſolved this, in that good Confeſſion which he Witneſſed before *Pontius Pilate*, when he plainly declared, *That his Kingdom was not of this World.* Whereupon St. *Auguſtine* * makes this loud Proclamation, *Hear Jews and Gentiles, hear Circumciſion, hear Uncircumciſion, hear all Earthly Kingdoms, I hinder not your Government in this World, my Kingdom is not of this World.*

* St. *Auguſt.* in *Evan. Johan.*

3. One Ordinance of God doth not Aboliſh another; the Laws of Chriſt in his Church, bring not in Lawleſsneſs into the Common-wealth; nor is God, the God of Order in the firſt, and the Author of Confuſion in the latter: For one Ordinance of God to deſtroy another, would argue want of Wiſdom in God the Ordainer: The very thought whereof is Blaſphemous. The Orders therefore of Chriſt in the Church, never were intended to bring Confuſion to Publick Societies: Nay, on the contrary, for the Churches ſake (which he loveth) he keepeth Order, and maintains Government in Common-wealths, that his Church, whilſt it is a gathering in the World, might find ſafe Harbour therein; that this Dove of Chriſt, might have a place where to ſet without danger, the ſole of her Foot: The Inference from the firſt Obſervation may be this.

If Chriſtian Religion confirms Civil Authority, then the way to bring Men to be truly Subject, and Obedient to their Superiours, is to Plant the Goſpel amongſt them; to take care for the powerful Diſpenſing of it, ſo that it may prevail upon the Hearts and Conſciences of the People, by bringing them to a through Conviction of the neceſſity of Obedience, in relation to the Command of God. For where there is not this through Conviction, rarely, if ever, are Subjection and Obedience truly paid. The World having for many Ages found, how vain a thing Law and Authority is, where there is no ſenſe of Religion, or any tie upon the Conſcience acknowledged. Religion is the greateſt Binder to Obedience, without which all Politick Courſes fail, and are found by experience to be too weak. There is no ſuch King-craft, as the wiſe Managing and Eſtabliſhing of Religion: It is not Power, it is not Wit that can ſtill, ſubdue, and keep under, a Rebellious Generation, without the Power of the Word in their Conſciences. They who fear not God, will not long be afraid, either to ſpeak evil of, or to oppoſe Principalities and Powers. Good Men will not be bad Subjects, nor will bad Men be conſcientiouſly Good ones; *Peſſimus quisque aſperrime Rectorem patitur*, was *Saluſts* Obſervation. The worſt of Men do of all others, with moſt Repugnancy

pugnancy admit a Governour: The fear of God is the best foundation of Obedience to the Magistrate.

To this purpose, remarkable is the Order prescribed by the Apostle, *Fear God, Honour the King*, 1 Pet. 2. 17. The like we may observe in *Solomon*, Prov. 24 21. *My Son, fear thou the Lord, and the King.* Men may from a principal of Policy, forbear to oppose the Magistrate as a danger; but only from a principle of Conscience, can they abhor it as a sin: What a force have these words in a Religious Ear, *Submit to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lords sake?*

Whatsoever Self-Interest, or Pride, or Lust, may Dictate otherwise, the declaration of Gods Will to a truly pious Soul, is the end of all Strife. The discovery that such or such a course, hath sin against God in it, is enough for a real Christian. The threats of a thousand Gibbets, or ten thousand Hells, will not be so dissuasive: The highest Interest therefore it is of Governours, to Advance, Settle, and Establish Religion.

Observ. 2. Every Christian, as a Christian, by the rules of his own Religion, is bound to yield Subjection and Obedience, to the Higher Powers. For the better Explaining of this, two things would be opened:

First, Wherein they should. Secondly. Wherefore they should.

First, Wherein they shou'd: Every Christian is bound to take heed to the Mouth of the King in all things, so far forth as he hath Power to Command. The Civil Magistrate is the Father of our Bodys after a sort, and so of all our outward Man. Hence two Grounds of great moment must be concluded.

Ground. 1. That every Christian ought to Obey all possible Commands of his Superiours, which are not against the Law of Nature, or the Law of God: The People answered *Joshua, All that thou Commandest we will do, whithersoever thou sendest us we will go; only the Lord thy God be with thee*, Joshua 1. 16, 17. So far as God is with our Prince, and his Commands are no prejudice to the Supreme Ordinances of God; so far every one of his Subjects does certainly owe him Obedience. That the Chief Magistrate hath this Power, in Civil Affairs, is indisputable. The great Question is, Whether or no in Church Affairs, he hath a Supreme Authority? I answer, Such a Power must be granted him, which I prove by these Reasons.

Reas. 1. The care of Religion must needs belong to the Supreme Magistrate, because Religion is the great Instrument of Political Happiness. And unless the Supreme Power, hath a Power, to manage and conduct Religion, to take care that it be rightly Ordered,

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the Supreme Power hath not ſufficient, to defend it ſelf: Becauſe the experience of Mankind, and natural Reaſon teacheth us, that nothing is ſo great a Security, or a Ruine to a State, as the well or ill Adminiſtration of Religion. And if Religion be the greateſt preſerver of Kingdoms, it ought to be Governed by the Hands of thoſe, whoſe Office it is to preſerve them.

The Guidance of Religion, is neceſſary to the Supreme Power, becauſe without it, he cannot in many caſes Govern his People. For beſides, that Religion is the greateſt Bond of Laws, and Conſcience the greateſt Endearment of Obedience, and a Security for Princes, in Cloſſets and Retirments, and their beſt Guard againſt Treaſons: It is alſo that, by which the Common People can be carried on, to any great, or good, or evil Deſign. And therefore *Livy* obſerves of *Numa*, that to Eſtabliſh his Government, he firſt ſetled Religion. Rightly judging, that nothing was more Powerful, either to lead a People on Gently, or to drive them on Furiouſly, than to Imprint in them the fear of a God. *Reaſ.* 2.

Chriſt in Heaven as King, Reigns over all the World, for the Glory of his Father, and the good of his Elect: Now it is certain, that Chriſt hath made Deputies of this his Kingdom; for all Power being given to him, as the Great King; there can be no juſt Government on Earth, but what he Appoints. The Government is upon his Shoulders, and all the Earth is his Inheritance, and therefore from him all Juſt Government is derived. Now as it is manifeſt, that Chriſt is the Fountain of all Kingly Power, ſo it is manifeſt that all this Power is Delegated to the Kings of the Earth; *For by Me Kings Reign, ſaith the Wiſdom of God.* And it is one of his moſt Gracious Appellations, that He is Prince of the Kings of the Earth. Hence that of *Athanaſius*, † *Chriſt taking his Throne, hath Tranſlated and Given it to holy Chriſtian Kings, to return them back to the Houſe of* Jacob. Now if Chriſt by his Kingly Power, Governs his Church, and Chriſtian Kings are his Deputies; then are they alſo the Supreme under Chriſt, of the whole Government of the Church. *Reaſ.* 3.

† *Athan. Serm. de Beat. Virg.*

If *David* ordered the Courſes of the *Levites*, with the Solemnities of the Publick Worſhip of God in his time; if *Solomon* put *Abiathar* from the Prieſthood; if *Jehu*, *Hezekiah*, and *Joſiah*, reform'd Religion, pulled down Altars, burnt Groves, deſtroyed the Worſhippers of *Baal*, and reduced the Religion of the God of *Iſrael*; What reaſon can there be, to deny this Power to belong to Chriſtian Princes? *Reaſ.* 4.

It was the ſenſe of Antiquity, that all Chriſtian Princes had this Power; and therefore that Chriſt would call Chriſtian Princes *Reaſ.* 5.

to

to an account for Souls. Thus *Isidore Hispalensis*, * *Let the Princes of the World know, that they must give an account to God, for the Churches which they have received from Christ, into their Protection.* Ever since the Emperours became Christians, the Affairs of the Church depended on them, as *Socrates* testifieth.

* *Isid. Hisp. in Sent. cap. 51.*

By these Reasons it is evident, that the Supreme Magistrate hath a Supreme Power in Church Affairs.

Another Question there is depending upon the former, namely, Whether or no, Christian Princes (granting them Authority in Church Affairs) are not so tied up to the Laws of Christ, in the Governing of his Church, that they have no Power to make Ecclesiastical Laws, and Constitutions of their own? I answer, Certainly they have such a Power; concerning which I thus conceive. Ecclesiastical Laws are of two sorts:

First, Such as prescribe the Matter of the true Worship of God, with the whole substance of Church-Government; which are all the Laws of Christ made to their hands.

Secondly, Other Ecclesiastical Laws, that remain for the Supreme Powers to make, which are likewise of two sorts.

1. Edicts, for Authorising and Commanding the execution of the former Laws, for the Building and Repairing of the Church, that it may be a lovely Spouse of Christ. In which sense, I take those words of the Reverend *Isidore* of *Sevil*, *The Kingdom of Heaven doth many times receive Beauty, and Increase, from Earthly Kingdoms; in nothing more, than by the Regulating, and well Ordering of Gods Publick Worship, according to the Laws of Christ.*

2. Such Constitutions as are Circumstantial, and in things meerly indifferent which may vary, according to the variableness of Times, and Dispositions of Churches: And here the Magistrate hath Power to make Church-Laws of his own, so as the Rule of the Word be not Transgressed concerning things indifferent. St. *Bernard* describes this Power of the Prince, thus; *Some things are purely Good, and some purely Evil, in these no Obedience is due unto Men; for as much as the former is not to be Omitted, although they should be Forbidden; nor the latter committed, although they should be Commanded.* But between these, there are certain middle things, which in respect of the Manner, Place, Time, or Person, may be both good and evil. In these the Law of Obedience takes place. In things of this kind, we must not prefer our own Minds, before the Pleasure of our Masters. In the performing of both these Laws, Kings and Queens are called Nursing-Fathers, and Nursing-Mothers to the Church.

* St. *Bern. Epist.* 7.

For

For resolving of the former Point, namely, That seeing Kings are of Power to do what they list, although not ever, Lawfully, in the regard of the Laws of God and Nature, yet safely, in respect of their Subjects; who may not violently resist their Persons, or oppose their Proceedings: *For who shall say unto a King, what doest thou?* In this regard they may, and sometimes do Command unlawful things, and Inflict grievous and heavy Burthens unjustly: Whether must Subjection be yielded to such, or no? I answer. *Ground*, 2.

Whatsoever is Commanded by those whom God hath set over us, either in Church, Common-wealth, or Family, which is not evidently contrary to the Law, and Will of God, ought to be of us, received and Obeyed no otherwise, than as if God himself had Commanded it; because God himself hath Commanded us to Obey the Higher Powers, and to Submit our selves to their Ordinances. Say it be not well done of them to Command it; What is that to thee? (saith * St. *Bernard*) *Let them look to that whom it concerns; do thou do what is thine own part faithfully, and never trouble thy self further.* For as the Father well notes, Gods Vicegerents must be heard and Obey'd in all things, which are not manifestly contrary to the revealed Will of God. I answer again, It is never lawful to Resist, or to use any Violence against a lawful Magistrate, for this were to rise up in Arms against the Ordinance of God, and consequently to fight against God himself. This the Apostle expressly affirms, *He that resists, resists the Ordinance of God:* He doth not say, he that doth not Obey, is disobedient to God; for that's not always true, sometimes it is necessary not to Obey. * St. *Bern. Epist.* 7.

As it happened to the Captive *Jews* under *Nebuchadonozar*, and to the Apostles under their Princes; they could not Obey God and them too: And then the Case is clear. But they who could not Obey, could Die, could go into the Fire, could suffer Scourgings, and Imprisonments. This was their ἐν μέγα, their great Sanctuary; they Obeyed where they could, where they could not, they would be sure to lie down under the burden, which they could not carry: For though in some Cases, it be lawful not to Obey, yet in all Cases it is necessary not to Resist; wherein we can, that is with safe Consciences, we must Obey, wherein we cannot, we must submit to the Power.

The Practice of the Primitive Saints, may further confirm us in this great truth: For if from the plain words of Scripture, we descend to the Doctrine and Practice of the Church of God, we shall ever find that the Ancient Christians, when they were most

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of all Tempted and Perſecuted, when they were deſpightfully uſed, ſpoyled of their Goods, Tormented, Tortured, and barbarouſly Murthered, yet ever held it unlawful (though they had Power ſufficient) to reſiſt: This was generally acknowledged and maintained, univerſally agreed upon, univerſally practiſed and taught, that let the Powers ſet over us by God, be what they will, we muſt Obey them where we can, where we cannot, we muſt ſubmit, and never go about by Violence to right our ſelves.

Tertullian boaſted with Confidence, that when *Piſſennius Niger*, in *Syria*, and *Claudius Albinus*, in *France* and *Brittany*, rebelled againſt *Septimnuus Severus*, (a bloody and cruel Emperour) and pretended Piety, and the Publick Good; yet none of the Chriſtians joyned with either. The *Theban Legion*, in the eighteenth year of *Diocleſian*, ſuffered themſelves to be Cut in pieces, ſix thouſand ſix hundred ſixty ſix in number, by *Maximianus* the Emperour: No Man in that great advantage of Number, and Provocation, lifting up his hands, except in Prayer; they laid down their Weapons, Prayed, and Died in order. When *Julian* was Emperour, an Apoſtate from his Religion, a great Perſecutor of the Chriſtians, and who by his Cruelty, brought the Commonwealth it ſelf in danger, though his Army did moſtly conſiſt of Chriſtians, yet they had Arms for him, but none againſt him: The particulars are many, which to this purpoſe, might be brought from Antiquity, but I forbear. Proceed we now to

The ſecond thing in the ſecond Obſervation, Wherefore Chriſtians muſt be Subject and Obedient to the Powers ſet over them by God? The Reaſons wherefore, are fully and plainly ſet down by St. *Paul*, and by St. *Peter*. By St. *Paul*, *Rom.* 13. As

Reaſ. 1. *Every Soul muſt be ſubject to the Higher Powers, becauſe there is no Power but of God. The Powers that be, are Ordained of God.* God is the Author of all Juſt Power. We muſt look upon the Ordinance of God, whatſoever the Perſons be, Commiſſion they have from Him, how Heatheniſh, Atheiſtical, or Superſtitious ſoever they be. Let the Perſon of the Prince be never ſo Accurſed, his Power is of God; even *Pilates* Power was of God, by our Saviours own Teſtimony, though he Armed it againſt his Perſon; and therefore our Bleſſed Redeemer ſubmitted himſelf to that Power; even He could ſay, *To me is given all Power in Heaven, and in Earth.* It is not our fears, nor our Jealouſies for the Future (ſuppoſing them never ſo well grounded) whether they reſpect the Subjects Liberty, or the Proteſtant Religion, our Jewels, and juſtly too; and yet as made uſe of, the prime Incentives of the late Rebellion: I ſay, therefore it is not our Fears, nor our

Jealouſies

Jealouſies, upon theſe or any other accounts, which will ever excuſe us before God, for our neglect of the preſent duties of Subjection and Obedience, to Principalities and Powers: We muſt leave thoſe great things to that Providence which Governs the World, and look to do our own part, in that relation to that Authority which God hath ſet over us.

We muſt be Obedient, ſaith St. *Paul*, *becauſe he that reſiſteth the Power, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God, oppoſeth God, whoſe Miniſter the Prince is.* For ſeeing it hath pleaſed the Almighty God, to appoint ſuch Order amongſt Men, namely, that they ſhould be Managed, and Governed by the Magiſtrates Authority. He that reſiſteth the Magiſtrate, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God, oppoſeth violence to Gods Commiſſion. *Irenæus* * adds this Reaſon by way of Confirmation, *By whoſe Command they are born Men, by his Command they are ordained Kings.* Of the ſame mind was *Tertullian* † after him, *Thence is the Emperour, whence he was a Man, before he became an Emperour; thence hath he his Authority, whence he had his Breath.* Reaſ. 2. * *Ire. Lib.* 5. *cap.* 24. † *Tertul. Apol. cap.* 30.

We muſt be ſubject, ſaith St. *Paul*, *becauſe God hath armed the Powers which he hath Ordained, with a Sword of Juſtice and Revenge.* The Overturners and Oppoſers of lawful Magiſtracy, have found their Calamities to ariſe ſuddenly; *An evil Man ſeeketh only Rebellion, therefore a cruel Meſſenger ſhall be ſent againſt him*, Prov. 17. 11. It hath been obſerved by ſome, that moſt, if not all thoſe whom the Scripture mentions, as Oppugners of Magiſtracy, have been Puniſhed by violent Deaths; God not vouchſafing ſo much as a Reprieval to a Death-bed: As *Corah* and his company, *Athaliah*, *Abſolon*, *Joab*, *Sheba*, *Adonijah*, with many others, may prove. Although therefore the Power of Rulers have Terrour in it, yet we muſt not hate them as hateful Perſons, or oppoſe Violence to Violence, as againſt Thieves or Wild-Beaſts; for they are by Gods Appointment, a Terrour, but only to evil Men, and for the Good, and Protection of good Men: Which leads me to the fourth Reaſon. Reaſ. 3.

We muſt be ſubject, ſaith St. *Paul*, *becauſe it is for our Good, that we ſubmit unto the Magiſtrate.* He is Gods Miniſter for Good, that is for the Publick Good, under which thine is comprehended. This is the moſt conſiderable part of the Magiſtrates Office, and for which we are to account our ſelves happy in him, that God hath ſet him over us, to Secure and Defend us, to help us to a peaceable Poſſeſſion of all Gods other Benefits; which are all nothing to us, if we may not enjoy them Reaſ. 4.

peaceably. He is the Miniſter of God for thy Good, to defend thee from a thouſand evils; from Robbers and Spoilers, from him that would defile Wife and Daughter, to ſettle every Man under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-Tree, that with good Hearts and chearfulneſs, we may ſerve our God. And therefore *Æſchylus*, rightly terms Obedience to lawful Authority, the Mother of Felicity. And *Philo* the *Jew*, the beſt and moſt profitable thing in our whole Life. Hence was it, that God commanded the *Jews*, *Jer.* 29. 7. to ſeek the peace of the City, whether he had cauſed them to be carried away Captive; and to pray unto him for it, becauſe in the Peace thereof, they ſhould have Peace. Upon this account, *Plutarch* in the Life of *Themiſtocles*, ſpeaking of a King, terms him the Living Image of that God, who preſerveth all things. 'Tis for the Subjects good, that Princes are ſet over them; and generally it is their own fault, if there be any thing formidable in them.

Reaſ. 5. *We muſt be ſubject*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *becauſe it is neceſſary*, The neceſſity being apparent, from the Nature of the thing, and the Command of God: And therefore, ſaith *Seneca*, † *Natura commenta eſt Regem:* Nature her ſelf, at firſt found out a King. What would Nations be without Government? But ſo many Dens of Wild-Beaſts. A lively repreſentation of this, we have from the old *Perſians*, who for five days together, after the deceaſe of their King, permitted the People to live Lawleſs, that after the experience of the Slaughters, Rapines, Robberies, and other Outrages committed in that ſhort Interval, they might learn to hold their Kings in more high eſteem. To this purpoſe amongſt the *Hebrews*, that of *Rabbi Hananiah* (one of the chief Prieſts) is much remembred: *Pray for the Peace of the Kingdom, for if it were not for fear of Authority, every one would ſwallow down quick his Neighbour.* Alike is the ſaying of the Heathen Orator, * *Without Government, neither Houſe, nor City, nor Nation, nor Mankind, nor Nature, nor the World it ſelf could ſubſiſt.* If the Magiſtrate were not a God to Man, Man would ſoon prove a Devil to Man; violent and bloody Men, fear not Hell ſo much as an Halter. And though the fear of the Magiſtrate ſaves not their Souls, yet many time hath it ſaved our lives.

† *Senec. de Clem. Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 19.

* *Cic. Lib.* 3. *de Leg.*

Reaſ. 6. *We muſt be ſubject*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *becauſe God hath bound our Conſciences to it.* Our Obedience is due, not only for fear of Puniſhment from the Magiſtrate, for it is poſſible for a cunning proſperous Offender, or Rebel, to avoid that, but in Obedience

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to the Conſtitution of God: *We muſt needs be ſubject, not only for Wrath, but for Conſcience ſake.* From hence we may judg, of the Perverſeneſs of ſome in theſe days: When the Apoſtle commands them to Obey for Conſcience ſake, they can Diſobey, and that for Conſcience ſake too. He chargeth them upon their Conſciences to be Subject, and they pretend their Conſciences to free them from Subjection. But we have by woful experience learned, what kind of Men theſe are, who pretend Conſcience, for their not Obeying the lawful Commands of their Superiours: The tenderneſs of their Conſciences hath not hindred many of them from an open Traiterous carriage, and Rebellious oppoſing the Power ordained of God. *Grotius* upon my Text, giving the Reaſon why St. *Paul* ſo ſtrictly enjoyned *Titus*, to remind all the Chriſtians under his Juriſdiction, *Of their Subjection and Obedience, to Principalities and Powers*, tells us; *Valde ſeditioſa ſemper fuit* Creta: The Iſland of *Crete* was ever very Seditious.

——*Mutato nomine, de te,*
(Anglia) *narratur.*——

England in her Rebellions hitherto, hath not, and it is to be feared for the future, is not like to come ſhort of *Crete*.

We muſt be ſubject, ſaith St. *Paul*, *becauſe whoſoever doth not Obey where he may lawfully, and whoſoever doth in any caſe reſiſt, ſhall receive Damnation to himſelf, both here and hereafter.* Here, upon the ſtock of Fear, for what the Magiſtrate can do to him; hereafter, upon the account of Conſcience, as he muſt anſwer it to God: For both for Fear, and for Conſcience, we muſt Obey, in good things and lawful, and we muſt not reſiſt any: Whoſoever doth, though he may eſcape the hands of Men, yet he ſhall ſurely partake of that Puniſhment, which belongs to ſo Sacrilegious a Contumacy; the Wrath and Judgment of God appertains to him. This is the ſubſtance of St. *Pauls* Diſcourſe, *Rom.* 13. *Reaſ.* 7.

The Reaſons which St. *Peter* gives, wherefore we muſt be Subject and Obedient to Sovereign Princes, are in brief theſe: You may find them in 1 *Pet.* 2. 13, &c. *Submit your ſelves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lords ſake*; that is upon his Command, and for his Honour. Theſe Ordinances being Gods Ordinances, ordained by Him, ſubmit therefore to them, for his Miniſters they are: Submit, *for this is the Will of God*: Sub-

mit, *for this is well-doing*: Submit, *for by so doing you shall put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men.*

Why *foolish?* Because there cannot be imagined a greater Folly, than to charge the Profession of it, or the Doctrine of Christianity (which utterly condemneth these disorders) with the contrary practice of the Professors: Meaning, that since the Enemies of Christ are apt to speak evil of you, glad would they be if they had a just occasion to accuse you, for not being Obedient to Government. And some there are amongst you, who are God knows very ignorant, and therefore foolishly pretend the liberty and priviledges of Saints, against the interest of Obedience. The mouths of these Men must be stopped, and you must submit to Kings and their Deputies, that you may please God, and confute the Adversaries. This is the sum of St. *Peters* Reasons.

If any yet remain unsatisfied, or desire stronger, or greater Reasons, for their Subjection and Obedience to Sovereign Princes, than these brought by the two chief of the Apostles. It is not because they are not perswaded of the true Ground, and necessity of Obedience; but because Lust, or Pride of Heart, or some supposed worldly Interest, sets them on to oppose Government and Governours. For my own part, I think it vain to add more Reasons of my own, after these Dictated by the Spirit of God; and a greater folly it would be in me, to imagine, that where these prevail not, mine should. What I have further to say at present upon this Subject, shall be by a few applicatory Inferences.

Infer. 1. That you readily and willingly be subject to, and obey whatsoever shall be lawfully enjoyned you, by the Supreme Authority of this Nation, and by those that are in Authority under him; not only out of Fear for what the Authority can do to you, but for Conscience sake: For be ye well assured, let your pretences to the contrary be what they can be, (supposing the Injunctions lawful) if you do otherwise, you sin against an Ordinance of God, because the Powers set over you are of God. It is true, Government is an Ordinance of Man, in regard of the Subject, it being born by Man; in regard of the Object, it being employed about Men; in regard of the End also, it being for the good of Men; yet not in regard of the Constitution or invention thereof, which is only from God.

And therefore *Paræus*, (though no great Friend to Monarchy) upon those words of the Apostle, *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lords sake; whether it be to the King,*

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as *Supreme*, &c. So we Translate the words; but nearer the Original, that Text may be Translated thus, *Be subject therefore to every Humane Creature.* The word Creature (saith *Pareus*) used in that Text, leads us to the consideration of God, the Prime Author of Magistracy; for though Magistrates are said to be Created, that is, Ordained by Men, yet the first Creator of them, is properly God alone; to whom all Creation doth Primarily appertain. So clear is the Divine Right of Kings, if we will believe a Person who was no ways affected to them, notwithstanding what hath been suggested to the contrary by disaffected Persons.

That you would take special notice of this Apostolical Precept, how it lays an Injunction upon all Ministers, frequently to remind their People of their Subjection and Obedience, to Principalities and Powers. A duty very necessary to be often urged upon you, even as things now stand; for though it hath pleased Almighty God, out of his infinite Mercy and Goodness, contrary to our deserts, and above our expectations, after so many years of wild Distraction, and bloody Rebellion, to settle this Nation, in some degree of Peace and Quietness; yet the Heart-burnings, Dissentions, Animosities, Sects, Schismaticks, Heretics and Atheists, which innumerably swarm amongst us, ready upon the first opportunity, to unite for the Ruine of both Church and State, are too apparent. And therefore when the Overseers of Christs Flock, shall in the fulfilling of their Ministry, often urge this Duty upon you, that they be not for this, unworthily Calumniated by you as Time-servers, Cryers up of the present Government, for Gain, Preferment, or any other Worldly Interest; but rather that they be highly Esteemed of you for it, as Men fearing God, and therefore Exhorting you to the fear of the Magistrate; as Persons labouring for your Good, watching for your Souls, as knowing they must give an Account, and therefore endeavouring in the discharge of their Duty, so to work every good Duty in you, that when they shall come to give up their Accounts, they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. *Infer.* 2.

That you beware of such who oppose, or sleight the present Established Government, whether of Church or State, and side not with them; but rather look upon them, as a Generation of Men, that are the greatest Enemies to the Peace, Welfare, and Happiness of this Nation: Because if Government *Infer.* 3.

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be neceſſary, then is it neceſſary that we Obey it; for there is nothing in the World, a greater diſtraction to its own Ends, than the reſiſting of Government. As *Zenophon* well obſerved, *He that oppoſeth his General, or Prince, oppoſeth his own Safety.* And therefore * St. *Auguſtine* aſſures us, *It is a Covenant, that all Men have agreed in, to be Obedient to their Kings; though they be Cruel, though they be Unjuſt, and Unreaſonable, let them be what they will.* They are Superiour to us, we have nothing to do, but ſomething to ſuffer; we are to leave it to God to remedy us, when He pleaſeth; till then, we muſt do as well as we can: St. *Paul* intimates this, in that Exhortation of his, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2. *I exhort, that Prayers and Supplications be made for all Men, for Kings, and all that are in Authority, that we may lead Quiet and Peaceable lives, in all Godlineſs and Honeſty.* Plainly implying, that the Security and Peace of Societies, depends upon the Power and Authority of Kings, and of Perſons in Eminency and Truſt under them. And therefore without breach of Charity, we may conſider our preſent Diſſenters, as Men weary of the Authority, becauſe weary of all the Bleſſings and Comforts of Peace; who are deſirous to throw down the Pillars, that they may pull down the Building upon their own and others Heads: The Happineſs and Safety of the Subjects depending upon the Authority, and Security of the Prince.

* St. *Aug. Confeſ. Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 8.

Many pretences they have for Exempting themſelves from Obedience; their chief one is this. It takes away their Chriſtian Liberty, whereas there is not any thing further from Truth, than that becauſe of Spiritual Liberty, Chriſtians ſhould be free from civil Subjection; for as this Liberty (let them manifeſt it as they pleaſe) exempts them not from Obedience to the Commands of God; ſo neither doth it exempt them from Obedience to the Magiſtrate, ordained of God. Nay, ſo far are the lawful Commands of Authority from oppoſing Chriſtian Liberty, that they rather Advance it: For true Liberty ſtands in the chuſing of Good, and rejecting of Evil, and this is furthered by the righteous Commands of our Superiours.

In a word, Men may pretend the Laws of the Realm, and the Conſtitutions of the Church, to be great obſtacles and hindrances to Holy Duties. They cannot ſerve God, as he hath commanded them; they cannot do their Souls that good, nor edifie their Brethren, as their Conſciences ties them, and otherwiſe they would, and could do. Thus, their erroneous Conſciences may Dictate to them, but the truth is, as the Apoſtle

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in the latter part of this Verſe, informs us: Subjection and Obedience to Principalities and Powers, are ſo far from being a Let, Hindrance, or Obſtacle, to any real good Work, that the way to be ready to every good Work, is to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magiſtrates.

To conclude, my well Beloved, in our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, ſeeing we are compaſſed about with ſuch a Cloud of Witneſſes, from the Unerring Word of God, from the conſtant Practice of our Fore-Fathers in the Faith, let us run with Patience the Race that is ſet before us: Never let us grudg at that Authority, which God himſelf hath put into the Hands of our Dread Soveraign; but readily and willingly to Obey all his lawful Commands, duly conſidering whoſe Authority he hath. And never may the Spirit of Sedition ſo far miſlead any of us, as to liſten to, or give heed to thoſe lying Vanities, which are Broach'd and ſent Abroad on purpoſe, to ſet this unhappy Iſland once again, a floating into Civil Blood. Oh! never, never, may thoſe Seeds of Schiſm and Sedition, which are deſignedly ſcattered and ſown, (like the Tares of the Evil one) to ſpoyl the Harveſt of your Peace and Plenty; find any kind entertainment, or take the leaſt rooting in your Hearts. But let us, remembring always how many, and how great Obligations we lie under, faithfully Serve, Honour, and humbly Obey our King in God, and for God, according to his bleſſed Word and Ordinance, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, Liveth and Reigneth, ever one God, World without End. *Amen.*

Soli Deo Gloria.

FINIS.